

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SEDU PINT AR
SUBJECT: EDUCATION MINISTER RESIGNS

1. EDUCATION MINISTER RICARDO BRUERA ON APR 20 ANNOUNCED HIS RESIGNATION EXPLAINING THAT IT WAS TO ALLOW PRESIDENT VIDELA A FREE HAND IN REORGANIZING THE MINISTRY. CANDIDATES BEING RUMORED TO REPLACE BRUERA INCLUDE RETIRED GENERAL OVIDO SOLARI, CURRENTLY EDUCATION MINISTER OF BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE; GUILLERMO GALLO, RECTOR OF LA PLATA UNIVERSITY; AND ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ VARELA, LAWYER AND FORMER LAW SCHOOL DEAN. SOURCE CLOSE TO VIDELA TOLD EMBOFFS APRIL 22 THAT NONE OF ABOVE WOULD GET JOB, HOWEVER.

2. BRUERA IS THE FIRST MINISTER OF THE VIDELA ADMINISTRATION TO HAVE RESIGNED. HIS RESIGNATION, WHICH HAS BEEN PREDICTED PERIODICALLY SINCE LAST YEAR, GREW OUT OF AN EDUCATION MINISTRY CRISIS BEGINNING APR 12 WHEN REAR ADMIRAL (RET.) ENRIQUE CARRANZA ASKED TO BE RELIEVED OF HIS POST AS EDUCATION SECRETARY. AT THE TIME, CARRANZA INDICATED HIS RESIGNATION MARKED "THE END OF A STAGE" AND THE EVENTUAL REPLACEMENT OF MILITARY OFFICIALS WITH CIVILIANS IN EDUCATION JOBS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, BRUERA ALLEGEDLY HINTED TO HIS CABINET MEMBERS AND OTHER MINISTRY OFFICIALS THAT HE WOULD WELCOME THEIR RESIGNATIONS IN ORDER TO

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EFFECT A MAJOR REORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY. ON APRIL 13, BRUERA MET WITH THE MILITARY JUNTA TO PRESENT HIS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM PLAN FOR THE CURRENT YEAR AND PROPOSE HIS CANDIDATES TO REPLACE THOSE LEAVING, MANY OF WHOM HOWEVER HAD STILL NOT OFFICIALLY RESIGNED. WHEN THE JUNTA EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH HIS REORGANIZATION PROPOSALS, HE ALLEGEDLY PRESENTED HIS RESIGNA-

TION TO VIDELA.

3. DISSATISFACTION WITH BRUERA AS EDUCATION MINISTER HAS SURFACED A NUMBER OF TIMES IN THE PAST. DESPITE FREQUENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CONFERENCES ANTICIPATING DECENTRALIZATION AND STREAMLINING OF THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND MAJOR STRUCTURAL REORGANIZATION AT THE PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND UNIVERSITY LEVELS, BRUERA HAD YET TO PRODUCE ANY CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR PUTTING HIS OUTLINE INTO OPERATION. THE NAVY, WHICH WAS GIVEN CONTROL OF THE EDUCATION MINISTRY WHEN THE MINISTRIES WERE DIVIDED AMONG THE THREE ARMED FORCES FOLLOWING THE MARCH 1976 COUP, HAD BECOME INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF BRUERA; PARTLY, REPORTS SAY, BECAUSE IT THOUGH HE WAS NOT GOING FAR AND FAST ENOUGH IN PURGING LEFTIST PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL FROM THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

ACCORDING

TO ONE REPORT, ADMIRAL MASSERA TOLD CONFIDANTS THAT IF IMPROVEMENTS WEREN'T FORTHCOMING IN THE MINISTRY HE WOULD UNDERLINE HIS DISSATISFACTION BY PULLING NAVAL OFFICERS OUT OF TOP EDUCATION POSITIONS. AN OFFICIAL CLOSE TO PRESIDENT VIDELA TOLD EMBOFF ON APR 21 THAT, IN FACT, VIDELA REALIZED BRUERA WAS NOT EFFECTIVELY FULFILLING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AND HAD, IF NOT ACTUALLY REQUESTED BRUERA'S RESIGNATION, MADE IT CLEAR BRUERA WAS FINISHED. BRUERA'S RESIGNATION, THE OFFICIAL SAID, IN NO WAY REFLECTED CONFLICT BETWEEN THE ARMED FORCES IN EDUCATION POLICY.

4. COMMENT: RUMORS OF IMPENDING TOP LEVEL RESIGNATIONS SURFACED AT THE TIME OF THE SELF-EVALUATION MEETINGS OF THE THREE ARMED FORCES ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUP, WHEN THE NAVY AND AIR FORCE DIRECTED THEIR GREATEST CRITICISM AT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION, ECONOMY AND LABOR. AT THE TIME, IT WAS SAID BRUERA WOULD BE FORCED TO RESIGN, AND LABOR MINISTER LIENDO MIGHT BE FORCED OUT AS WELL, BUT THAT AS ECONOMY MINISTER MARTINEZ DE HOZ WAS DEEMED IRREPLACEABLE, VIDELA WOULD HAVE TO REACH DOWN TO THE NEXT LEVEL IN THE MINISTRY AND REMOVE SOME OF THE SECRETARIES AS A SOP TO THE NAVY. IN FACT, ON APR 19 IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT COMMERCE SECRETARY GUILLERMO BRAVO HAD RESIGNED APRIL 6 BUT THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN HIS CASE, AS IN BRUERA'S WAS HELD BACK AT THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST.) BRAVO HAD FOR SOME TIME MADE HIMSELF UNPOPULAR BY TAKING ON THE DIFFICULT TASK OF INDUCING THE PUBLIC TO FIGHT INFLATION BY VMXVXVMPURCHASING CHEAPER SUBSTITUTES FOR MEAT AND OTHER HIGH PRICES ITEMS. OTHER CHANGES RUMORED TO TAKE PLACE AMONG THE ECONOMY SECRETARIES INCLUDE ENERGY SECRETARY ZUBARAN AND PLANNING SECRETARY WALTER KLEIN. HILL

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